

# SACRAMENTO RIVER CONSERVATION AREA

c/o California Department of Water Resources  
2440 Main Street  
Red Bluff, Ca. 96080



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## SRCA NOTES

July, 2001

### ❖ Project Activities and Updates

A project meeting on **Hamilton City** will be held on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 9:30 a.m. at the Hamilton City Fire Hall to update all interested stakeholders on the progress to date. The SRCA has sent letters of support for Tehama County's request for funding through the Corps of Engineers Section 135 for work at **Woodson Bridge**. A letter was sent to Stillwater Sciences requesting answers to several questions on their technical memorandum regarding **M&T/Llano Seco** pumps, and a more comprehensive report is expected shortly. A recent inspection by a diving team hired by the City indicated two of the diffuser tubes have been buried and the buildup around the pump intakes has increased significantly.

### **Socioeconomic Study Update – reported by The Nature Conservancy**

Based on stakeholder input, the "post program condition" for the socioeconomic study has been finalized. This represents the set of assumptions that describes how the riparian corridor might look 20-30 years from now. With this step completed, the consultants for the study, Jones and Stokes, Assoc., are able to begin data collection that will examine potential costs and benefits associated with establishing a riparian corridor between Red Bluff and Colusa. If you have any questions, please call Marlyce Myers at (916) 449-2851, ext. 27.

### **Compatible Agriculture Stakeholder Meetings – reported by The Nature Conservancy**

The Nature Conservancy is the recipient of a Great Valley Center grant to conduct meetings that will address issues related to wildlife restoration and compatible agriculture along the Inner River Zone of the Sacramento River. The first meeting is scheduled to take place sometime in early October. If you would like to be involved in these meetings or if you have any questions regarding the process, please call Dawit Zeleke at (530) 897-6373.

**Moulton Weir –reported by the Sacramento River Partners** – Work is commencing on the Moulton Weir project. Currently, firebreaks are being disked, along with initial site clearing, to facilitate an evaluation of the field. Neighbors are being notified of these activities.

#### **June 21<sup>st</sup> TAC Meeting** – Discussion Items:

- Proposed language for the Inner River Zone Guidelines in Reaches 1, 3, & 4. The language in Reach 4 was modified to read: **"The IRZG within Reach 4 consists of the floodway within the federally authorized flood control levees, and does not compromise the integrity of the levee structure or conflict with the operation and maintenance jurisdiction of local maintaining entities as designated by the Reclamation Board. The IRZ guideline does not include the weir or by-pass areas"**.
- Language on Reach 3 was also discussed and narrowed to one alternative to be taken to the July 16<sup>th</sup> meeting in Princeton.
- State and federal regulations for "Safe Harbor" agreements and "Incidental Take" and their differences. Concerns were raised about consequences to landowners should endangered species move onto their property as a result of habitat restoration efforts on adjacent lands. There was agreement that these were extremely important issues that needed on-going discussions.

The SRCA Board has established two committees to deal with issues that are of concern to stakeholders.

The "Landowner Assurances" committee has been formed, chaired by Ben Carter, to deal with "safe harbor", mitigation fund, and "good neighbor policy" issues. The committee will sort through these issues first and oversee them as the TAC works through them.

The second committee, led by Denny Bungarz, will look at the PILT/Economic Analysis issues and the impacts to the counties.

A **Public Informational Workshop** was held in Meridian on June 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss the proposed Inner River Zone Guidelines in Reach 4. There were approximately 150 people in attendance. There were many concerns expressed by the landowners including the question of what benefit there is to them in having an Inner River Zone as well as a general distrust of the conservation area and its possible impacts. A change to the language was suggested at the meeting: **"The IRZG within Reach 4 consists of the floodway within the existing federally authorized flood control levees, ....."**

#### **June 28<sup>th</sup> SRCA Board Meeting** – Discussion Items:

- Election of officers: Ben Carter, Colusa County landowner, Chairman; Jane Dolan, Supervisor Butte County, Vice-Chair; Don Anderson, Glenn County landowner, Secretary/Treasurer.
- Patrick Wright, CALFED Executive Director, updated the group on the status of the program. He emphasized their priority is to build regional strategies and will use that format to get better public input which would drive the program. They are also trying to coordinate funding mechanisms to help with safe harbor, permitting process, and other issues that impact landowners.
- Mark Charlton stated the Corps and Fish & Wildlife Service are still in negotiations on the Biological Opinion; they will come back to the Board when there is resolution. Discussion raised questions about the lack of public input; it was noted this dialogue is between the agencies and the decision is science-based so landowners are not involved. Mark noted this is not a new project, it is part of an old contract. As new projects are planned, the SRCA would be involved.

❖ **Frequently Asked Questions:**

**Q What are the benefits to local residents of the Sacramento River Conservation Area?**

**A** The SRCA Board is made up of twenty-one members, fifteen of which are voting. Fourteen of the fifteen voting members represent landowners and public interests within the seven counties. This organization gives counties and landowners a very strong voice in activities along the River. Because the SRCA is not a governmental agency, it does not have the ability to direct or regulate activities. However, because of the commitment by both State and Federal agencies to coordinate their activities through the SRCA, **local issues are heard and addressed at a much higher level.** The six non-voting members of the SRCA Board represent the state and federal interests along the River and provide both information of their activities and insight to their agency of local issues and concerns.

The SRCA also provides a local voice in planning and coordinating activities along the Sacramento River. Through the Memorandum of Agreement, public agencies have committed to work with local government and landowners through a mutually agreed upon set of principles and guidelines outlined in the 1989 Plan and Handbook. Signatories of the MOA agree to plan overall management activities and coordinate specific projects through the SRCA. By coordinating planning efforts with all affected parties, habitat restoration, flood control, and local concerns are addressed as the project plan is developed. The SRCA has formed a “Landowners Assurances Committee” to develop a process to address a “Safe Harbor” policy. **The goal of this committee will be to work on reducing or eliminating negative impacts to neighboring landowners by adjacent activities.**

Long-term, **endangered species improvement should mean less regulatory restrictions on normal flood control and agricultural activities.** By allowing the natural river processes to occur within the Inner River Zone, improvement of conditions for many species may prevent the listing, or possibly provide the de-listing, of some endangered or threatened species within the area. Through the MOA, a permanent program to streamline the permit process has been agreed to by the signatories.

Overall, **the Sacramento River Conservation Area provides the opportunity for local residents to be heard and their concerns addressed, much more so than in the past.**

**Public Informational Workshop – July 16<sup>th</sup>, 7-9 p.m., Princeton High School/473 State Street/Princeton.**

A workshop will be held to discuss the proposed definition for the Inner River Zone Guidelines in Reach #3, from Chico Landing to Colusa. The “Inner River Zone” (IRZ) was developed to identify that area along the river most prone to river movement and flooding. **Proposed: “The Inner River Zone Guideline within Reach 3 consists of the area of the 100-year meanderbelt combined with 50-year erosion projections, and does not compromise the structural integrity of the federally authorized flood control levees or conflict with the operation and maintenance jurisdiction of locally maintaining entities as designated by The Reclamation Board”.**

**Future SRCA Board/ TAC Meetings:**

- Next TAC meeting **July 19<sup>th</sup>**, 9:00 a.m., Willows City Hall, Willows
- Next SRCA Board Meeting **July 26<sup>th</sup>**, 4:00 p.m., Willows City Hall, Willows



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